

VILLAGE OF BREWSTER
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
18 MARCH 2020
7:30 P.M.
PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING
DRAFT AGENDA

The Board of Trustees of the Village of Brewster will hold a public hearing at 7:30 PM followed by a regular meeting at 7:31PM or as soon thereafter as time permits, on March 18, 2020 at Village Hall, 50 Main Street, Brewster, NY 10509.

Attendees:

Mayor: James Schoenig
Deputy Mayor and Trustee:
Trustees; Mary Bryde, George Gaspar,
Village Police Chief:
Village Engineer:
Village Counsel: Anthony Molé
Clerk & Treasurer: Michelle Chiudina
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer: Donna Milazzo

Absent:

Christine Piccini
Tom Boissonnault
John Del Gardo
Todd Atkinson

Pledge to flag.

Notation of Exits

Public Hearing

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, that the Board of Trustees of the Village of Brewster will hold a public hearing on March 18, 2020 at 7:30 p.m., or as soon thereafter as time permits, at the Village Hall, 50 Main Street, Brewster, New York 10509, pursuant to Sections 257-53 and 257-63 of the Village Code, for the purpose of hearing the public with regard to a proposed increase in water rents for Village residents and consumers outside the boundaries of the Village.

Mayor Schoenig motions to open up the public hearing, Trustee Bryde 2nd, all in favor 3 to 0.

Clerk Chiudina begins the stream on Facebook so those who cannot attend the meeting may still respond. Their comments will be attached to the minutes.

Mark Anderson proposes that the Village raises taxes over the water rate and states that the water rates are very high. Tyler Murello agrees and argues that the Village rates are higher than any other municipality in the area.

Mayor Schoenig explains that he inherited the debt of prior administrations when he took office in 2007.

Mark Anderson argues that the way the Village forms their budget should be reconsidered. He continues by stating that the Village funds many of its entities through the water fund even if that entity has nothing to do with water. Mr. Anderson asks why the Village feels the need to raise the water rates by 25% and what the Village will need that for?

Mayor Schoenig explains that the budget has not been completed at this time and the money will be distributed where it is needed.

Mark Anderson believes that the Village needs to get their budget under control and that the police is an area where cut backs can be made as it has increased over the past six years by 65%. Mr. Anderson reads off various line amounts from the police expenditures and questions why the budget is so high for a police force for a jurisdiction that is half a square mile.

Mayor Schoenig and Mr. Anderson add up the various lines of the police expenses and determine the total to be \$600,000. Mr. Anderson states that the increase in the police budget from year to year is substantial and well over the marginal increase of yearly inflation and further notes that the Village had a police force provided by the Sheriff's department. Mayor Schoenig explains that when he first came to office there was no police. Once a department was established, the officers were only available 18 hours out of the day. During an election year, the people of the Village asked for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year police service. As the department grew, expenses increased, all of the officers are part time and make less than \$35,000 a year as per their pension conditions. He informs the public that when the sheriff's department was policing the Village, it was not nearly as much coverage as what the Village receives today.

Mark Anderson suggests that the Village should be looking into areas of the budget that they can cut back on and to consolidate with other municipalities where it is needed. Mayor Schoenig notes that when he took office in the middle of the fiscal year, total expenditures were 2.4 million, which he cannot claim as his budget as it was approved by the prior administration. Since then, there has been a decrease for a number of years after that by 13% and then 3.6% and decreased slightly over the next few years and has only increased slightly after that, by between 2 and 4%. The current total expenditures for 2019-2020 budget are 1.8 million. Tyler Murello asks that the Mayor find places to cut costs for this upcoming budget year.

Mayor Schoenig explains that every year since he has been in office, the Village always shops around for their electric and for the insurance. During his administration, the Board came up with a retirement plan to allow those who had worked in the Village Offices for years to retire to save money and then return to work part time. His administration was also able to pull the Village out of a time where a bond payment was almost forfeited, which would have cost the Village money in fines.

Mark Anderson asks about the lab building at 25 Marvin Avenue and how much it costs to operate. Mayor Schoenig explains that the lab building is vacant and the only expenses are gas and the occasional electric bill and notes that there is no mortgage on that building. Mayor Schoenig further explains that the plan is to covert that building to move the Village Offices down there as well as the Courts and move the Police into the 50 Main Street Office. Tyler Murello asks about what will happen with 208 Main Street? Mayor Schoenig explains that the building will be sold to be put back on the tax roll and the DPW will be moved to a different location. Mark Anderson asks how much that property is worth and Mayor Schoenig states that an appraisal was done a few years ago so a new one will have to be done to determine the price.

Mark Anderson reiterates his question as to why there needs to be an increase in the water rates and what that money will be for. Mayor Schoenig responds that the money will be allocated to where it is needed and once the new budget is done, he will be able to share that with the public. Mayor Schoenig also notes that the rates have not been raised since 2012 and Mr. Anderson and Mr. Murello argues that the adjustment of the number of gallons used per tier could be considered a rate increase, which was done in 2016.

Mark Anderson notes that the current budget states that there will be \$1 million in water revenue over the course of the year, which is more than 1/3 of your collections and property taxes and finds that this number is disproportionate against renters and landlords. He continues by stating that it is disproportionate against the concepts of affordable housing. Mayor Schoenig questions that if the taxes go up, like what was suggested, would that be disproportionate as well? And he further inquires if the utility bills are considered write offs as well. Mr. Anderson agrees but explains that if a business is operating at a negative cash flow it will not succeed and would rather not have higher expenses.

Tyler Murello states that he would rather have his taxes raised rather than his water rates. Mayor Schoenig states that taxes can only be raised by the percentage that is given by the State Comptroller's Office. Mark Anderson states that a private water company has to go to the Public Service Commission to raise their rates, does the Village need to do that? Mayor Schoenig answers no.

The Board and public discuss the current state of the world pertaining to the COVID-19 virus and how it will affect day to day operations, as well as the upcoming budget preparation.

Mayor Schoenig reiterates that every year, the Village looks to save money any way that they can. Mr. Anderson states that the answer does not answer his question as to why water rates need to increase. Mayor Schoenig states that this is just one way that the Village can raise money towards items that are underfunded in the upcoming budget and will be announced once the budget is released. Mayor Schoenig asks the public what has not been raised in the past 4 years. Mr. Anderson states that snow removal was lower this year due to the mild winter. Mayor Schoenig argues that snow removal for the Village is not the only cost that needs to be paid during the winter. Costs include DPW working overtime to salt the roads when the temperature drops, and other labor costs.

Mark Anderson quotes Clerk Chiudina in a meeting from February that there are line items that have gone over budget and would like to know what are the funds and why that is. Clerk Chiudina explains that this happened in the sewer fund due to incidents that occurred that were out of our control such as a generator failing and an electrical surge taking out an entire pump station and our budget is so tight, there was no cushion to absorb the unintended costs.

Trustee Gaspar notes that the Village does hire businesses in the private sector and their rates do go up each year and the Mayor mentions that there are some aspects of running a Village that must be outsourced but the Village always goes to the lowest bidder.

Mark Anderson makes the comments that he pays more for water than the Trustees who live in the Village do, and Mayor Schoenig asks why that is, and Mr. Anderson explains that this is because the people that he represents owns 1/5th of the properties in the Village. Mayor Schoenig asks if Mr. Anderson's tenants are paying the same amount for water as he is and Mr. Anderson explains that his buildings that have apartments that are smaller than the average household are paying more per square foot for water than someone who lives in a house. Mayor Schoenig asks if Mr. Anderson believes that the rates should be based on square footage and Mr. Anderson uses the example of the price of garbage per year for a single unit is the same across the board and it doesn't matter how many people or how much garbage is produced. Mayor Schoenig explains that the water rates came into existence because the rates were unfair to those living in single family homes with only one or two people, and water rates make it equal for everyone instead of having the flat rate. Mr. Anderson states that there was a time when the water bills were reasonable and Mayor Schoenig notes that before his administration, work was done on the water and sewer lines with no plan to pay back what is owed and now he must make decisions in order to pay off these debts.

Mayor Schoenig states that no decision will be made today, and any increase would not take effect until the July billing of water. Clerk Chiudina states that a few people have commented on the Facebook live stream and many of the comments are concerning the water discoloration. Mayor Schoenig recalls an incident with a booster pump at the well field breaking down and causing water discoloration while it was being repaired and brought back online. Another incident was the fire that occurred on North Main Street and the use of the hydrants would cause discolored water.

Tyler Murello and Mark Anderson announce that they receive calls from their tenants about discolored water, and Mr. Murello mentions a specific household on Prospect Street that had to throw out their bed sheets due to the discolored water staining their sheets. Mayor Schoenig states that he lives on Prospect Street and his water is fine and does not understand why the water at his house is okay but the water at a house five houses down from him is not. Mr. Anderson remarks that water quality is an issue in the Village of Brewster and Mayor Schoenig responds that the Village passes their inspections every year.

Mayor Schoenig argues that because his water is clean and a house five down from him is not, and they receive water from the same water main, he believes that it could be the pipes that run into the house, which are the property owner's responsibility. Mr. Anderson asks for more questions from the live stream comments, and Clerk Chiudina reads off a comment asking who is checking the water, it's never been this bad, and Mr. Anderson and Mr. Murello laugh. When the Mayor asked why they thought it was funny, Mr. Anderson responded that the water is valued so high but the water looks disgusting and the tenants have to buy bottled water to drink. Mr. Anderson suggested that a filter is needed at the water stations and asks if the Mayor has a filter at his house, and Mayor Schoenig informs the public that his plumber told him to get rid of his filter.

Clerk Chiudina informs the public that if you purchase Iron Out off of Amazon or at any convenience store, it takes the discoloration out of the laundry.

Trustee Bryde states that she does not have dirty water in her home but some of her neighbors do. Clerk Chiudina reads a comment stating the Annual Water Quality Report shows no problems with the water and the occasional discoloration is caused by pressure changes. Mayor Schoenig recalls a property on Carmel Avenue that receives water from the Village was experiencing discolored water and upon further inspection of our water main, the issue was not from the water in the main.

Mayor Schoenig motions to keep the public hearing open for comments and concerns to be reviewed by the Board for seven days, Trustee Gaspar 2nd, all in favor 3 to 0. Copies of the comments made on Facebook will be attached to the minutes.

Mayor Schoenig motions to open up the regular meeting, Trustee Gaspar 2nd, all in favor 3 to 0.

Regular Meeting

1. Brewster Little League – Parade Permit. Mayor Schoenig mentions that he waived the need for a representative from Brewster Little League. Mayor Schoenig motions to approve the parade permit for the Brewster Little League opening day parade on April 18, 2020, with a rain date of April 25, 2020. The patrons will begin assembling at 9:30 and the parade will begin at 10:00 at Veteran's Park and will end at Markel Park and all fees will be waived, Trustee Bryde 2nd, all in favor 3 to 0.
2. Monthly Reports:
 - 2.1. Code Enforcement February, 2020 Report. Tabled for when Mr. Bill Scorca is able to attend so the Board can ask questions.
3. General Code Update for 2019. Trustee Bryde gives authority for the Mayor to sign the estimate for the General Code update so long as it does not exceed \$1,640.00, Gaspar 2nd all in favor 3 to 0.
4. Request for Payment from Gianfia. Clerk Chiudina explains that this payment to Gianfia for the work on the Tonetta Brook/Marvin Avenue Headwall project will be reimbursed by CHIPS and Multi Modal funds. Mayor Schoenig approves the payment request for \$29,709.47 to Gianfia, Trustee Gaspar 2nd, all in favor 3 to 0.
5. Wells Park Bike Path Project. Tabled.
6. Water Rate Proposed Increase. Mayor Schoenig reiterates that the public hearing will be open for 7 days for public comment.
7. Correspondence sent & received for February, 2020. Trustee Bryde asks if Clerk Chiudina informed the Putnam County Department of Health that the medical equipment cannot be store at 25 Marvin Avenue. Clerk Chiudina states that she

had emailed the Department of Health representative but never heard back from her after she requested confirmation, and she will reach out again to confirm. Mayor Schoenig motions to approve the correspondence sent & received for February, 2020, Trustee Bryde 2nd, all in favor 3 to 0.

8. March 4, 2020 Minutes for approval. Trustee Bryde approves the March 4, 2020 minutes, Trustee Gaspar 2nd, all in favor 3 to 0.

9. Vouchers Payable – Trustee Bryde reviewed the vouchers in the office today and found everything in order.

9.1. A -	GENERAL FUND	\$6,183.78
9.2. C –	REFUSE & GARBAGE	768.08
9.3. F -	WATER FUND	2,573.38
9.4. G -	SEWER FUND	31,150.75
9.5. H63-	TONETTA BROOK MARVIN AVE HEADWALL	29,709.47
9.6. TA -	TRUST & AGENCY	1,550.50

Total Vouchers Payable	\$71,935.96
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Mayor Schoenig motions to approve the vouchers payable as written, Trustee Gaspar 2nd, all in favor 3 to 0.

10. Other Business

- 10.1. Trustee Bryde thanks Clerk Chiudina and the staff at the Village Offices for the hard work during these difficult times.

11. New Business - None

12. Public Comment.

- 12.1. Mark Anderson asked about the medical equipment that was not to be stored at 25 Marvin Avenue. Mayor Schoenig explains that the Putnam County Department of Health asked to use the building to hold their monthly immunity clinic to give shots to seasonal workers.

13. Executive Session. Mayor Schoenig motions to go into executive session for legal matters and no action will be taken after, Trustee Bryde 2nd, all in favor 3 to 0.

14. Mayor Schoenig motions to come out of executive session and adjourn the regular meeting, Trustee Gaspar 2nd, all in favor 3 to 0.



Janet Ward · 9:40 Thank you for the live meeting

Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Centeno Strehlau Lori · 11:49 Hello are you closing everything down

Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Jess Zaibel · 29:54 I think they are sitting a little too close no?

Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Brian D'Angelo · 32:35 Hmm...Sounds like someone is up shits creek right now???

Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Jennifer Belen Farenholz · 37:48 Why are we being asked to pay more for contaminated water?

Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Jennifer Belen Farenholz · 38:47 Who checks the water? It's never been this bad?

Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Jess Zaibel · 39:21 I wouldn't mind paying for this expensive water if I could drink it

Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Jennifer Belen Farenholz · 40:22 Will my questions be addressed???

Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Jess Zaibel · 43:36 But does your wife drink it?


Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Jennifer Belen Farenholz · 44:03 It's not funny!! Our water is very contaminated!

Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Dan Mullan · 44:03 Isn't that the towns problem to find out wh 


Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Jess Zaibel · 44:18 Brand new pipes here

Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Jess Zaibel · 45:23 You must have the only water that's clean I bet if you went door to door nobody drinks their water 

Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Jess Zaibel · 45:34 How about a survey


Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Peter Brewster Hansen · 48:17 can also be caused by old feeder lines from the street box to the house.

Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Jennifer Belen Farenholz · 48:18 It's not occasional. It's been several times a w 

Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Robert Cullen · 0:22 You guys dressed alike. Lol

Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Peter Brewster Hansen · 48:38 have a good night.

Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Jennifer Belen Farenholz · 31:30 My water was been very dirty. We've gone through several filters in only a couple of weeks. Is this problem being addressed?

Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Elizabeth Wilcox Rollins · 0:00 Jennifer Belen Farenholz the water is terrible lately. I won't even give it to my dogs.

Like · Reply · Message · 2w

1



Write a reply...



Christine Sheedy Dangers · 0:49

My water is dark brown today! I'm trying to post a picture here but am unable to. Disgusting!!!

Like · Reply · Message · 2w



Peter Brewster Hansen · 46:53 Annual Water Quality Report shows no problems. off-color is an occasional problem caused by pressure changes

Like · Reply · Message · 2w

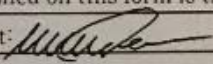


Christine Sheedy Dangers · 0:00 Peter Brewster Hansen it's disgusting!!

Like · Reply · Message · 2w

PARADE PERMIT APPLICATION

Applications shall be filed with the Village Clerk at least 60 Days in advance of the event and applicant is required to appear before the Board of Trustees at least 30 days in advance of the event:

Name of Parade Chairman: Michael Tempesta		Telephone Number: 845-278-3013	
Email: vicepres@brewsterll.org		Cell Phone: 203-887-8187	
Organization Name: Brewster Little League		Org. Telephone Number: 845-278-3013	
Organization Address: 12 Main St Brewster NY 10509			
Head of Organization: Richard Anderson		Email: president@brewsterll.org	
Parade Date: 4/18/2020	Rain Date: 4/25/2020	Number of Participants: 450	
Starting Time: 10:00 AM	Ending time: 12:00 PM	Number of Vehicles: 1 Fire Engine	
Assembly Street and assembly time: 9:30am at Southeast Veterans Park (Electrazone Field)			
Details: The Opening Day Parade/Ceremony provides the community an opportunity to cheer on the players of Brewster Little League, so please do your best to bring your child to this fun event. You are welcome to walk with your child's team or cheer them on along the route			
Starting Point: Southeast Veterans Park (Electrazone Field)			
Termination Point: Markel Park			
Parade Route: Southeast Veterans Park, up Railroad Avenue, left onto Main Street and follow to Markel Park.			
All information furnished on this form is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.			
Signature of Applicant: 		Date: 3-16-2020	
Approved by Village Board of Trustees.		Date:	Permit Number:
Village Clerk, Michelle Chiudina:		Date:	
Recommendation of Brewster Police Department:			
BPD Signature:		Date:	
BPD to Notify: Fire Department: P: 279-3555 Fax: 279-8849	Officer/Admin Name:	Date:	Name/method of Contact:
Sherriff's Office: P: 225-4300 Fax: 225-4154			
State Police: P: 279-6161 Fax: 279-7046			

Failure to properly fill out this application or meet the requirements stated at the top of this form may result in denial of the permit application. Revised: February, 2020.